



NMCPHC QUICK HITS

Seasonal Influenza

Influenza, or the flu, is a viral illness characterized by the sudden onset of fever, respiratory symptoms and fatigue. Influenza season in the United States typically peaks in January and February, but can begin as early as October. While most people infected with the influenza virus recover quickly, complications can lead to more severe disease presentation and extended illness. The military training and shipboard environments are particular areas of concern with regards to disease spread due to close living quarters.

Symptoms

People who have the flu often feel some or all of these symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue

Prevention

Vaccination is the best way to reduce the chances of getting ill from influenza. In addition to getting vaccinated, you can take everyday preventive actions like washing your hands to reduce the spread of germs.

DoD Policy

It is Department of Defense (DoD) policy that **all** active duty and reserve component personnel be immunized against influenza.

NMCPHC Surveillance and Reporting Guidance

NMCPHC influenza surveillance strategy includes central analysis of electronic clinical data, local Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-Based Epidemics (ESSENCE) monitoring, Fleet Disease and Injury Surveillance, and reporting of hospitalizations associated with laboratory confirmed influenza via Disease Reporting System internet (DRSi).

- Navy and Marine Corps units providing patient care should report any hospitalization associated with laboratory confirmed influenza in patients under the age of 65 via [DRSi](#).
- NMCPHC analysis suggests that surveillance using a pneumonia specific syndrome in [ESSENCE](#) can assist in tracking severe illness that may be associated with influenza.
- Units not recording data in an electronic clinical encounter record or not using a tool like ESSENCE to track disease trends locally can implement [disease and injury \(D&I\) surveillance](#).

Additional Resources

- For a comprehensive summary of influenza activity in the DON during influenza season access the NMCPHC Epi Data Center (EDC) [Weekly DON Influenza SITREP](#).
- Contact your cognizant [NEPMU](#) if you have any questions. NEPMU staff can assist with investigation support, risk assessment and obtaining definitive laboratory testing.
- Visit NMCPHC's [Influenza webpage](#) for additional influenza policy, guidance, and resources.

